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ABSTRACT

The Abridged Patton Speech Content Exam is designed to measure achievement and potential achievement in a speaker-audience oriented speech course at the college level. The abridged exam contains 30 test items rather than the 100 items of the unabridged version. The 30 items include questions as follows: 2 on stasis or propositions, 8 pertaining to speech organization, 6 dealing with reasoning, 3 on logical support or proof, 5 about language and semantics, 2 on bodily activity, 1 pertaining to voice, 2 on ethos, and 1 on the speech communication process. The abridged exam has been administered to over 1,500 college students, and studies of the results show a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores at the .01 level of confidence. The standard mean score for the 1,500 students on the pretest is 11, and on the posttest, the mean score is 15. The abridged test appears to reflect student achievement in skill, knowledge, and attitude, and to have potential in measuring teacher effectiveness and in predicting student success. (DB)

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TE 002 433

A CONVENIENT AND VALID MEASUREMENT FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN SPEECH

Robert Bohlken and Kim Giffin

Franklin Knower has pointed out that a speech paper and pencil test should serve the purpose of either a teaching device or a measuring instrument, and that if it is used to measure achievement it should "provide a comprehensive measuring device for the total."[1] The task of developing such a test seems insurmountable, but a test which appears to fulfill these requirements in a speaker-audience oriented college class is the Patton Speech Content Exam printed by the University of Kansas Communication Research Center. The exam's primary purpose is to measure knowledge, but it is highly correlated with attitude and ability to deliver speeches: "the total" of the measured course performance.

The exam was developed by Bobby R. Patton in 1966 as part of his doctoral dissertation research. Patton solicited two tests that purported to measure knowledge in speech communication: The Wisconsin Test of Speech Attainment, developed by William Price, and the Iowa Test of Speech. From the 150 item Iowa test and the 64 item Wisconsin test, Patton selected on face validity 100 items for inclusion in his test. The items were systematically divided into two 50-item forms, Form A and Form B, containing evenly distributed types of course content material. The tests were administered to 305 students:

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[1]Franklin Knower, "The Analysis and Validation of Test and Test Items in Speech," Speech Teacher, X (September 1961), 228-29.

Form A to 123 and Form B to 182. An item analysis was run and highly satisfactory difficulty and discrimination levels were established for 69 items. After further external validity of the 69 items was determined by analysis of numerous college speech instructors, the exam was reduced to a 60 item multiple choice exam.

The Patton Speech Content Exam scores were correlated with initial scores of the Knower Speech Attitude Scale and the final grades of 420 speech students at the University of Kansas which indicates a relationship of the Patton exam scores and the "total" including speech attitude and ability. Patton, using a control-pretest-posttest design, found a very significant gain in the scores of the students who took the speaker-audience oriented speech class.

In order to expedite the administration of the exam and reduce the amount of time required for the taking of the exam, Robert Bohlken and Kim Giffin abridged the exam to 30 items. To make the exam more universal in nature, the abridgement was accomplished by administering the exam to 120 college students, who had had the basic speech course, chosen at random at two different institutions. An item analysis was performed and 30 items were chosen which were in the difficulty range of .40 to .60, above the discrimination level of +.35, and within the range of subject material thought by sixteen speech instructors to be covered in speaker-audience oriented speech courses. The selected 30 test items include two questions on stasis or propositions, eight questions pertaining to speech organization, six dealing with reasoning, three questions on logical support or

proof, five questions about language and semantics, two on bodily activity, one question pertaining to voice, two on ethos, and one on the speech communication process.

The Abridged Patton Exam has been administered to over 1500 students in the basic speaker-audience oriented course at three institutions of higher learning: The University of Kansas, Peru State College and Northwest Missouri State College. Using the pretest-posttest design, the studies show a consistent, significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores at the .01 level of confidence. These studies indicate that the test measures what it purports to measure, achievement in speech behavior as taught in the basic course. Through continued item analyses, the thirty items have maintained adequate difficulty and discrimination values. The mean difficulty score of the items on the pretest has been .36; whereas on the posttest it has been .48. In the test there are only three items, no's 16, 23 and 26, which have shown any weakness in maintaining adequate difficulty and discrimination values. These three items appear somewhat difficult for all the students. The standard mean score for the 1500 students on the pretest has been 11. The standard mean score for these students on the posttest has been 15.

The students' scores on the Abridged Patton Speech Content Exam have shown very significant relationships with students' speech performance ratings and final speech course grades. Applying the above data to a computer program devised by Robert Reed of the University of Kansas to determine the capabilities of an instrument in predicting success in the course, we found very favorable results for the Patton

Exam in predicting student speech performance success.

The Abridged Patton Content Exam scores have also been significantly related to the Rossillon Speaker's Self-Concept Scale[2] scores. The Rossillon Scale purports to measure a student's attitude toward himself as a communicator and to predict his potential success in a speech performance course.

From all indications, the Abridged Patton Speech Content Exam is a convenient, reliable and valid measure of achievement and potential achievement in a speaker-audience oriented speech course. It appears to reflect the Gestalt of achievement in skill, knowledge, and attitude. It appears to have excellent potential in measuring teacher effectiveness and students' fulfillment of course objectives; it also appears to be capable of predicting student success. It would appear that if a student is capable of scoring above the mean score of fifteen, he should possibly be exempted from the basic speech course.

More research on this instrument is necessary, but it appears to be a solid stepping stone to a standardized paper and pencil test in the area of the basic speaker-audience speech communications course at the college level.

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[2]Joseph Rossillon, "Rossillon Speaker's Self-Concept Scale," University of Southern Illinois, Carbondale, 1966 (Mimeographed).

THE ABRIDGED PATTON SPEECH CONTENT EXAM

1. Generally, the amount of time spent on the development of a controversial idea in a speech depends chiefly upon (A) how much support of the idea the audience needs; (B) how much time the speaker has at his disposal; (C) how much the speaker knows about the idea; (D) the amount of new evidence that the speaker can offer; (E) whether action on the part of the audience will be demanded.

2. "Should the University of _____ offer a straight liberal arts undergraduate degree?" is a question of: (A) meaning and interpretation; (B) policy; (C) value; (D) fact; (E) controversy.

3. Which of these statements would be most effective in gaining audience understanding? (A) Almost 250,000, or 19% of your fellow Kansans, about as many people as there are in Wichita, will suffer if this bill is made law. (B) This proposed law is unfair to 19% of the residents of Kansas; (C) This proposal will disrupt the lives of 250,000 Kansans; (D) As many people as the total population of Wichita will be wronged by this bill; (E) 250,000 Kansans will be harmed if this proposal is adopted, 19% of the state's population.

4. As a general rule, which of the following would be the best way to begin a speech: (A) Use a dramatic appeal to arouse the audience to action; (B) Begin with two or three jokes that do not pertain to the subject; (C) Present an example or illustration that focuses on the main theme of your speech; (D) Announce the title of your speech; (E) List the main points you intend to cover.

5. "I think there is no doubt that if we guaranteed a minimum income to the poor, we would have more money circulating in the economy. Paul Samuelson, professor of economics at MIT who has written one of the texts in economics used here, made this clear when he said: "The marginal propensity to consume is highest among the low income groups."

   This argument, taken from a speech, seeks to gain logical adequacy and acceptance through use of (A) inductive reasoning; (B) specific instances; (C) authority; (D) causal reasoning; (E) deductive reasoning.

6. "A kilowatt-hour is a unit by which electric energy is measured, just as the bushel is the unit for measuring wheat and corn, and the pound is the unit for measuring butter."

   Of which method of definition is this an example? (A) Definition by negation; (B) Definition by analogy; (C) Definition by etymology; (D) Definition by example; (E) a rhetorical definition.

7. "Let's suppose that a student was to borrow a thousand dollars to complete his schooling." From this remark you have an indication that a speaker is going to: (A) present an analogy; (B) draw an inductive conclusion; (C) reason from a general assumption; (D) present a hypothetical illustration; (E) reason from cause to effect.

8. The development of the thesis briefly outlined below follows which pattern of arrangement? (A) topical; (B) chronological; (C) problem-solution; (D) spatial; (E) causal.

Thesis: Funerals are strictly for the living.

(A) Social respectability is gained through burial practices by the family of the deceased; (B) Friends and relatives have the satisfaction of seeing the deceased for a last time; (C) Wakes provide an opportunity for conveying respect to the family of the deceased.

Well organized discourse should have unity, coherence, emphasis, proportion. Match each of these terms with the phrase that defines it or describes how it is achieved by marking on your answer sheet the letter of the term each of the following phrases defines:

9. Clues to the importance a speaker attaches to his various ideas.
10. Focusing on a central idea throughout the speech.
11. The development accorded to the various parts of the speech.

(A) Unity
(B) Coherence
(C) Emphasis
(D) Proportion
(E) None of above

12. When a speaker changes his position on the platform: (A) he should do so only to indicate a transition from one main idea to another; (B) he introduces a distraction into his speech and should avoid movement; (C) he may do so without regard to what he is saying; (D) it should contribute to the communication of his ideas and attitudes; (E) he should do so simply to relieve tension and weariness.

13. On the question of "labor-management relations," which of the following lists these sources in an order from the most unbiased to the most biased source as far as the evidence on this question is concerned? (A) a, b, c. (B) b, c, a. (C) c, a, b. (D) c, b, a. (E) b, a, c. (Please see bottom of page.)

14. "Truman will go down in history as a very great or a very foolish president." This statement is an example of (A) an appeal to prejudice; (B) a valid historical assumption; (C) a black or white fallacy; (D) ad hominem fallacy; (E) ad populum fallacy.

15. Reasoning which moves from an assumption or a general principle to an application of that assumption or general principle in a given situation is: (A) legal; (B) deductive; (C) causal; (D) inductive; (E) categorical reasoning.

(No.13) a. Secretary of the Department of Labor
b. President of the International Association of Electricians
c. Harvard University Study of Labor Conditions in the U.S.

16. "I am closing my 52 years of military service. When I joined the Army even before the turn of the century, it was the fulfillment of my boyish hopes and dreams. The world has turned over many times since I took the oath on the plain of West Point, and the hopes and dreams have long vanished. But I still remember the refrain of one of the most popular barracks ballads of that day which proclaimed most proudly that---

"Old soldiers never die; they just fade away. And like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away---an old soldier, who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty." (Douglas MacArthur, Address before Congress, April 19, 1951)

The language used in this speech excerpt is primarily: (A) denotative; (B) indicative; (C) objective; (D) allegorical; (E) connotative.

17. The term used to designate a sharing of the attitudes and feelings of the speaker on the part of the listener(s) is: (A) response; (B) symbolic communication; (C) empathy; (D) group dynamics; (E) imagery.

18. "Students are so immature these days you can't give them any responsibility. And they are going to continue to be immature until they accept some responsibility." This is an example of: (A) faulty causal reasoning; (B) ad hominem attack; (C) circular reasoning; (D) reasoning from a disjunctive assumption; (E) inductive reasoning.

19. To establish his credibility, his "personal proof," a speaker must, according to Aristotle: (A) be competent in his subject; (B) demonstrate good character; (C) display good will; (D) A, B, and C; (E) A and B.

20. "This year we did our most extensive nuclear testing we had a great many severe tornadoes in widely scattered parts of this country. Atomic tests have a severe effect upon the weather." This is an example of: (A) faulty analogy; (B) post hoc fallacy; (C) arguing in a circle; (D) ad hominem fallacy; (E) appeal to prejudice.

21. The use of force in articulating words, phrases, and syllables is known as: (A) timbre; (B) phonation; (C) stress; (D) effusion; (E) enunciation.

22. Suppose you are attempting to describe for your listeners the Lincoln Center in New York City. Which method of organization is most likely to be the best adapted to the presentation of your ideas: (A) deductive; (B) topical; (C) spatial; (D) chronological; (E) causal.

23. The final determinant of the meanings of words is: (A) usage, (B) the dictionary; (C) the origin of the words; (D) the inherent meanings contained within the words themselves; (E) all of the above.

24. A new Tru-Vue television burned out the picture tube 28 days after it was purchased. A week after it was replaced one of the speakers began to squeal. A few days later the tuning knob came loose. The purchase concluded: "Tru-Vue television sets are a pile of junk. They ought to be taken off the market." He (A) reasoned ex post facto; (B) reasoned from statistics; (C) was the victim of the black and white fallacy in thinking; (D) generalized hastily; (E) reasoned fallaciously from a faulty assumption.

25. Which of the following is least likely to affect your research on a speech topic? (A) the sex of the audience; (B) the educational level of the audience; (C) the geographical location where the speech is given; (D) the occasion of the speech; (E) the time of day.

26. "Four hundred and fifty of the 600 people living in the Jasmine Addition earn more than $10,000 a year. It is quite clear that people living in an area where the average annual income is $10,000 can afford to pay for a new fire station."

    Which of the following statements applies the most appropriately to this unit of argument: (A) Average income cannot be computed from the statistics given above and the argument is therefore fallacious; (B) The argument is apparently sound and should be accepted; (C) The argument should be rejected on the grounds that it contains an ad hominem attack; (D) The argument would be sound and should be accepted if the speaker cited the source of his statistics; (E) None of the above statements is appropriate.

27. The character of the speaker which enhances his credibility with an audience is known as: (A) rapport; (B) pathos; (C) logos; (D) feedback; (E) ethos.

28. Introductions should be longer in a persuasive speech given before a (A) neutral audience; (B) selected audience; (C) hostile audience; (D) partisan audience; (E) concerted audience.

29. Speech communication can best be described as (A) an event; (B) persuasion; (C) inquiry; (D) a process; (E) expression.

30. If in a speech someone says that the word "propaganda" can be defined in many ways, but for the purposes of his discussion he will take the term to mean, "Short circuiting the rational process," he is using: (A) a dictionary definition; (B) an Aristotelian type of definition; (C) an operational type of definition; (D) a Platonic type of definition; (E) a rhetorical definition.

KEY AND ITEM RATIONALE FOR ABRIDGED PATTON SPEECH CONTENT EXAM

1. (A) A speech may be viewed as a stylized response to the constraints of an audience to which it is given. This question is concerned with this concept from the standpoint of how much time to spend on a controversial idea. It obviously is foolish to spend much time on an idea when little is needed and little time when much is needed. One does not simply "support an idea"; one "supports an idea in terms of an audience."

2. (B) Any persuasive speech involves a proposition. It is useful for the student speaker to know what type of proposition he is presenting. Additionally, from the standpoint of critical evaluation, different criteria need to be employed in the evaluation of different persuasive propositions. The classical concept of stasis still has much utility today.

3. (A) Statistics tend to be the most meaningful if they are presented in extremely graphic or concrete terms. This usually means expressing them in units which the members of the audience can readily picture. When speaking to a Kansas audience the unit of Wichita's population should be meaningful.

4. (C) An introduction should gain audience interest and disclose and clarify the subject to be discussed. Although speeches can be introduced in numerous ways, depending upon the subject and the audience, item C should be designated as the best answer because it is the only one that focuses on the main theme of the speech and has a potential interest factor.

5. (C) A speaker may draw on different kinds of supporting data in order to make his arguments acceptable to an audience. One aid to gaining acceptability is the use of authority opinion.

6. (B) Definition is an invaluable agent for achieving clarity in communication. The student should know more about definition than merely looking up words in a dictionary. He should know how words acquire their meaning; he should know how to make meanings clear through various definitional techniques. In this instance a comparison is used for the purpose of making meaning more graphic.

7. (D) The use of interest and clarity devices are essential to truly effective communication. This being true it is important that a student is aware of common interest and clarity devices. This question concerns one such device, the hypothetical illustration.

8. (A) The student completing the basic course in speech will not only know that organization is important in oral discourse but also that there are patterns of organization that will aid both speaker and listener. The pattern described here, the topical, is a way of breaking down the thesis through separate but related topics which, when reassembled, lead the audience to accept the thesis.

9. (C) Similar to written communication, the factors of unity, coherence,
10. (A) emphasis, and proportion have importance in spoken messages. The stu-
11. (D) dent is first of all encouraged to make a unified presentation by focusing on a central idea throughout the speech; he is encouraged to relate the points of his speech in order to achieve clear thought progression; he is encouraged to strive for emphasis upon his key ideas; and he is encouraged to have some degree of proportion for his main points.

12. (D) The objective of all bodily activity in speech is to contribute to the communication of ideas and attitudes. It is sometimes useful to move, to indicate transition and to relieve tension and weariness, but neither of these factors constitute the basic rationale for bodily movement.

13. (C) This question concerns the possible bias of sources. Students in speech are trained to distinguish between biased, possibly biased, and probably unbiased sources. Of the three sources given in this test item, the Harvard Study would probably have the least reason for bias, in fact one of its prime objectives probably would be objectivity; the Secretary of Labor is likely to be less biased than the president of the Electricians Association who has a vested interest.

14. (C) Most questions are multivalued in nature. Whenever a two-valued proposition is presented to him, the student is encouraged to look for other possibile dimensions of the question in order to determine if the dichotomy the speaker presents is realistic or fallacious.

15. (B) Another example of the students' ability to discriminate the type of reasoning. The student who satisfactorily completes Speech 1A should be able to identify and use both inductive and deductive reasoning in oral discourse.

16. (E) The student is taught to recognize connotative language. Connotative language of course has its value, but at the same time it can be used to sway people by means of language alone. It is likely that this will happen if the listener can distinguish between connotative and denotative expressions.

17. (C) An important concept in communication is the idea of speaker-listener rapport. The speaker tries to present his message and himself, whenever possible, in such a way as to gain an emphatic response. Empathy in some respects is technical jargon but on the other hand it is a term that probably should be found in any educated person's vocabulary. Moreover, it is difficult to deal with the concept effectively without the term.

18. (C) Circular reasoning of the type in this test item is probably far more common than most people realize. We feel that the student should be taught to detect it when it occurs.

19. (D) The foils of this test item represent what Aristotle thought to be the components of ethos or personal proof in speech communication. An image of expertness, trustworthiness, and good will is what any effective speaker will try to develop.

20. (B) False cause fallacies are extremely common. Careful examination of causal relationships lies near the heart of critical listening. The term post hoc should not be foreign to anyone with any previous speech background.

21. (C) Not much emphasis is placed upon the voice in Speech; however, the student is expected to have some knowledge of the basic process of vocal production. Suggestions concerning vocal delivery are meaningful to the student if he knows the basic concepts. Stress is a meaningful and interesting part of vocal delivery.

22. (C) This question expects the student to have some knowledge of certain stock methods of arrangement which are useful for dealing with many speech subjects. In this instance spatial arrangement would doubtlessly be the best method.

23. (A) Students should know that words do not derive their meanings from the dictionary but from people. This question also tests the idea that meanings do not reside in words themselves but in people using the words.

24. (D) The hasty generalization is one of the most common reasoning problems that should be detected by the critical listener. The question of sufficiency of evidence is one that the student is taught to apply to claims a speaker makes.

25. (E) Each audience and each speech situation embody constraints to which the speaker must adapt his presentation. This test item identifies some of the important constraints and tests the student's ability to distinguish between the more critical ones and one, the time of day, that is not likely to be critical from the standpoint of research, even though the time of day may influence the communication act.

26. (A) A speech student is taught to take a close look at statistics whenever they appear in an argument. No average income could be computed from the information given in this argument.

27. (E) The role of the speaker's ethos in communication is discussed in almost any basic speech course. Ethos is known to exert considerable influence in speech communication.

28. (C) This item raises a question concerning audience adaptation. A brief introduction that discloses and clarifies the subject is all that is normally necessary for a partisan, selected, concerted, or neutral audience. However, a hostile audience may require that a speaker prepare them for his message with a longer introduction that embodies examples and various kinds of evidence before he states his central idea.

29. (D) Students are taught that speech communication is a process. It is an interaction between speaker and listener. To be sure it is not expression, because that term does not necessarily connote communication. It is not an event that just happens, and it is not limited to persuasion or inquiry.

30. (C) People commonly use operational definitions in their speeches, in fact the operational definition is a most useful technique. We feel that the speech student should know what an operational definition is.

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